

2 Timothy 2:1-13

7-10-05

“The Winning Christian Life!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. Here Paul borrows images from **daily life** to illustrate the traits necessary for effective service.¹
- 1.2. **Outline:** Discipling Teacher; Dedicated Soldier; Disciplined Athlete; Diligent Farmer.

2. **THE WINNING CHRISTIAN LIFE! (1-13)**

- 2.1. **DISCIPLING TEACHER!** (1,2)
- 2.2. **Be strong** – “*keep on being empowered by God*” - “*Keep in touch w/the power*” (A.T.Robertson)
- 2.3. **In Jesus Grace** – free grace, saving grace, gifting grace, enabling grace, providing grace, abounding grace, strengthening grace.
- 2.4. We are not only to **guard** the treasure(1 Tim 6:20) but **pass it on** to others!
 - 2.4.1. A Sunday School teacher, a **Mr. Kimball**, in 1858, led a Boston shoe clerk to give his life to Christ.
 - 2.4.2. The clerk, **Dwight L. Moody**, became an evangelist. In England in 1879, he awakened evangelistic zeal in the heart of Fredrick B. Meyer, pastor of a small church.
 - 2.4.3. **F. B. Meyer**, preaching to an American college campus, brought to Christ a student named J. Wilbur Chapman.
 - 2.4.4. **Chapman**, engaged in YMCA work, employed a former baseball player, Billy Sunday, to do evangelistic work.
 - 2.4.5. **Billy Sunday** held a revival in Charlotte, N.C. A group of local men were so enthusiastic afterward that they planned another evangelistic campaign, bringing Mordecai Hamm to town to preach.
 - 2.4.6. During **Hamm's** revival, a young man named **Billy Graham** heard the gospel and yielded his life to Christ.
 - 2.4.6.1. Only eternity will reveal the tremendous impact of that one Sunday School teacher, Mr. Kimball, who invested **his life** in the **lives of others**.
 - 2.4.7. “The task of the local church is no to **preserve** the truth, as in a museum; but to **live it & to teach it** to the generation to come.”²

¹ Shepherd’s Notes; pg.48

² Warren Wiersbe; N.T. Oulines.

- 2.4.8. We need to have **active involvement** in the training of a future generation of Christian servants.
 2.4.8.1. Preaching isn't enough, we must carefully instruct.
- 2.4.9. A teacher is not there just to acquaint you with the tools of your trade; a teacher **is** a tool of your trade, no matter what that trade is.
- 2.5. **Sterile Christians...reproduce yourself!**
 2.5.1. S. Truett Cathay, owner of Chick Filet said, "If you wish to enrich **days**, plant flowers; If you wish to enrich **years**, plant trees; If you wish to enrich **Eternity**, plant ideals in the lives of others."
- 2.6. There was a Filipino Methodist Bishop on a Europe-bound ship. The Bishop told of his experience when he came to North America as a student years before. The 1st Sunday his roommate appeared in the doorway, an umbrella under each arm. He offered to show him the way to his place of worship and then planned to go on to his own church. As they started down the street he thought, "If this man has this kind of faith and interest in my spiritual life surely I should find out what his faith is like." He asked his friend to take him to his church and he attended it all four years. As a result he attended Drew Theological Seminary and years later became a Bishop in the church.
 2.6.1. "There is such a thing as a direct call from God w/o mediators...but it's rare. - Usually there is a man with two umbrellas."
- 2.7. **DEDICATED SOLDIER!** (3,4)
- 2.8. Here we have the opposite of a terrorist.
 2.8.1. Even if the terrorist who takes his own life with a bomb. He is still a chicken for not giving anyone a fighting chance against him...not even the elderly & little children that he destroys.
- 2.9. **Every Christian** is already a soldier in God's army; it is just that some troops are **loyal** & some are **not**.
 2.9.1. **Q: Are you a battle-ready soldier? Do you know gallantry & sacrifice? Are you fresh out of boot camp?**
 2.9.2. **There are no safe battles—but there are no safe compromises either.**
- 2.10. **[1] Endure Hardship!**
 2.10.1. **Remember back in Judges 7 when God was looking for "a few good men?"**
 2.10.2. Gideon had an army of 32,000, the Midianites 135,000 [1 in 4 ratio].
 2.10.3. Any tremble w/fear can turn back – 22,000 left [new ratio 1 to 13].
 2.10.4. **Another screening process - cup there hands to drink{300} [1 to 450]**
 2.10.5. They were *Semper Fidelis!* (Always faithful!)

- 2.10.6. They might die, but they would die with their sandals on, defending Israel! (Kent Hughes pg.191,192)
- 2.10.7. **“The sword of the Lord & Gideon!”** was their battle cry!
- 2.10.8. **Story** of a British soldier in the 1st World War who lost heart for the battle and deserted. Trying to reach the coast for a boat to England that night, he ended up wandering in the pitch black night, hopelessly lost. In the darkness he came across what he thought was a signpost. It was so dark that he began to climb the post so that he could read it. As he reached the top of the pole, he struck a match to see and found himself looking squarely into the face of Jesus Christ. He realized that, rather than running into a signpost, he had climbed a roadside crucifix. Then he remembered the One who had died for him -- who had endured -- who had never turned back. The next morning the soldier was back in the trenches.
- 2.10.8.1. As a Christian soldier, when you are **tired, afraid and discouraged**, strike a match in the darkness and look on the face of Jesus Christ!
- 2.11. **[2] Not encumbered by civilian life!**
- 2.11.1. Elizabeth Howard(Elliot) was a student at Wheaton College. She had scrutinized the boys on campus and decided that there was really only one who at all interested her: **Jim Elliot**. He displayed a maturity and godliness that was very attractive. When the school yearbooks were handed out, Elizabeth asked Jim to sign hers, hoping that if there was any interest in her, he might indicate so in signing her yearbook. When he returned it, she rushed to her room, found his signature and read beneath it, **“2 Timothy 2:4.”**
- 2.11.2. **Uriah was a great example of this!** – when David had taken his wife Bathsheba & she conceived, to hide it he brought Uriah back from the battle so he'd come home & sleep w/his wife...but he slept at the door of the kings house(w/servants). 2nd night got him drunk, still didn't go home. {Sent him into the heat of battle & had Joab retreat back}³
- 2.11.3. **Shortly after joining the Navy**, the new recruit asked his officer for a pass so he could attend a wedding. The officer gave him the pass, but informed the young man he would have to be back by 7 p.m. Sunday. **“You don't understand, sir,”** said the recruit. **“I'm in the wedding.”** **“No, you don't understand,”** the officer shot back. **“You're in the Navy!”**
- 2.12. **[3] Please your recruiting officer!**
- 2.12.1. Our main task is to **please Him** – not others, & not ourselves.

³ 2 Sam.11

- 2.12.2. **Audie Murphy** was an unlikely hero. Weighing in at only 112 pounds and with the face of a child, Audie was 18 years old when he went overseas during World War II. Nothing about him suggested a hero in the making. Yet when called upon by his commanding officers to do the duty of a soldier, Murphy held nothing back. By war's end, the quiet boy from Texas had fought with extraordinary bravery and saved the lives of countless fellow soldiers. He returned home to an adoring public, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, and received at least 36 other medals—more than anyone else in U.S. history, **all because nothing meant more to him as a soldier than the will of his commanding officer.**⁴ [Headstone: Arlington Nat. Cemetery]

Napoleon's genius had been attributed to many things, but, above all, he was a superb natural leader of men. Like any wise leader he was aware that his own success would have been nothing had his men not been willing, even eager, to follow him. Obviously he could not know and personally inspire every man in his vast army, therefore he devised a **simple technique** for circumventing this difficulty. Before visiting a regiment he would call the colonel aside and ask for the name of a soldier who had served well in previous campaigns, but who had not been given the credit he deserved. The colonel would indicate such a man. Napoleon would then learn everything about him, where he was born, the names of his family, his exploits in battle, etc. Later, upon passing this man while reviewing the troops, and at a signal from the colonel, Napoleon would stop, single out the man, greet him warmly, ask about his family, compliment him on his bravery and loyalty, reminisce about old campaigns, then pin a medal on the grateful soldier. The gesture worked. After the review, the other soldiers would remark, "You see, he knows us—he remembers. He knows our families. He knows we have served." Bits and Pieces, Oct. 17, 1991

- 2.13. **DISCIPLINED ATHLETE!** (5)
- 2.14. Here is another proof text that Paul subscribed to ESPN & ESPN2!
- 2.14.1. In his letters he makes more than 2 dozen references to athletics (Including: *boxing, wrestling, running*)
- 2.14.2. Both the **Greeks & Romans** were enthusiastic athletes, & spectators.
- 2.14.2.1. So Paul uses the **Olympic Games** as an illustration of the practical life of the believer.
- 2.14.3. The Christina life demands the practice of *self-discipline*, affecting both **personal behavior & inner attitude**.
- 2.15. **Obeying the Rules!** – Ancient athletes who participated in the Olympiad 1st had to complete a required 10 month training period & then swear an oath (before the statue of Zeus) that they had done it. These were the rules.
- 2.15.1. There must be single-minded, whole hearted discipline!
- 2.15.2. Think of it – no one gets anywhere w/o this in any **area** of life!
- 2.15.3. It suggests rigor & sweat!

⁴ Today in the Word, June 21, 1995

- 2.16. **The Promised Prize!**
- 2.17. If they **won** the race but **broke** the rules they were disqualified.
- 2.17.1. It took **discipline, dedication, & direction** for an athlete to be a winner.
- 2.17.1.1. And it takes these same qualities to produce a winning Christian life.
- 2.17.2. Scott Hamilton the Olympic skater, shortly after winning his Gold medal said, "Someone asked me why I was looking at the medal so intently. What I was doing was looking at 16 years of my life."
- 2.18. **DILIGENT FARMER!** (6,7)
- 2.19. Farming was & still is very hard work.
- 2.19.1. [1] Early & long hours [2] Constant toil(plowing, sowing, tending, weeding, reaping, storing) [3] Regular disappointments(frost, pests, disease) [4] Much Patience(everything happens at less than slow motion) [5] Boredom.⁵
- 2.20. The **church** is a garden, & the **seed** is the Word of God.
- 2.20.1. Various servants **plant, water, & harvest** the seed in due season.
- 2.20.2. Timothy was not to be discouraged if the harvest failed to come immediately.
- 2.20.2.1. It takes **time, patience, & hard work** to develop a fruitful garden.
- 2.20.2.2. "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Gal.6:9)
- 2.21. The **farmer** who works hard is the **1st to enjoy** his fruits.
- 2.21.1. And the **diligent Christian servant** can expect the same!
- 2.21.2. This passage anticipates a final reward for serious & steady service.
- 2.22. (7) Reflect on this. The Lord will give you the insight how to apply it.
- 2.23. **A CHAINED MESSENGER & AN UNCHAINED MESSAGE!** (8-10)
- 2.24. (8) **Jesus** is the **source & substance** of "*my gospel*" & the reason for my **suffering!**
- 2.24.1. *Resurrection from the dead* is the prime example of victory over death. (It is an encouragement for any believer who faces suffering)
- 2.25. (9) Luther sang("A Mighty Fortress"), "*The body they may kill, God's truth abideth still: His kingdom is forever.*"
- 2.26. (10) Paul reminds Timothy that he too was suffering, & it was both **for & with** Christ, & their suffering was for the benefit of the church.

⁵ Kent Hughes; pg.196

- 2.27. **A HYMN OF HIS FAITHFULNESS!** (11-13)
- 2.28. Possibly an early Christian Hymn, or confession of faith, or a Creed of the day.
- 2.28.1. It emphasizes the believer's oneness with Christ.
- 2.29. Note the four conditional statements - "If".
- 2.29.1. Each statement is an action of the believer.
- 2.29.2. His main point...**the faithfulness of God!**
- 2.29.3. Listen to these "*hang in there*" lines for Timothy (& us).
- 2.29.4. **1st Stanza = Conversion** – Jesus' res gives us res life right now!
- 2.29.4.1. The proprietor of a **drycleaning** and **dyeing business** hung this quaint sign in his window: "We dye to live, we live to dye; the more we dye, the more we live; and the more we live, the more we dye."
- 2.29.4.1.1. For the child of God, the more he dies, the more he lives!
- 2.29.5. **2nd Stanza = Perseverance** – Endure, *hold your ground*. Esp during affliction.
- 2.29.6. **3rd Stanza = Apostacy** – knowingly disown Him.
- 2.29.7. **4th Stanza = Faithfulness** – The final stanza comes as a surprise a magnificent reversal. (wrestling freshman yr.)
- 2.30. **He remains faithful** - "Are you not afraid you will slip through His fingers?" an unbeliever asked an old saint. "How can I?" "I am one of His fingers!"
- 2.30.1. **We are often unfaithful...God is never unfaithful.**
- 2.30.2. We can always trust God to act according to His **character & promises!**
- 2.30.3. What a promise to end on! - Especially to those of us saints, like Peter, who fall into unfaithfulness at times.
- 2.30.3.1. **Samuel Rutherford**, who spent years in Aberdeen prison, wrote, "Often & often, I have in my folly torn up my copy of God's covenant w/me; **but**, blessed be His name, He keeps it in heaven safe; & he stands by it always."
- 2.31. **He cannot deny**(disown) **Himself** – No man is always himself, but God is always Himself.
- 2.32. **I challenge you saints of Murrieta:**
 Find a Timothy & be a **teacher** that trains, equips, & disciples!
 Be a single-minded, tough-skinned, unencumbered **soldier!**
 Be a winning **athlete** that plays by the rules & is pursuing a wreath that won't perish!
 Be a hard-working, diligent **farmer**...who will 1 day enjoy his fruit!
- 2.32.1. C.K.Barrett observes "*Beyond warfare is victory, beyond the athlete's effort is the prize, & beyond agricultural labor is the crop!*"
- 2.33. [1st Service] We've talked today about a **Teacher**, a **Soldier**, an **Athlete**, & a **Farmer**...before we close I would like to introduce to you a **Pilot!**